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**ROMANIAN ARMED FORCES TRANSFORMATION PROCESS – THE CORE ISSUE OF THE  
NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY TOWARDS NATO INTEGRATION**

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## ABSTRACT

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Adapting to the changes that occurred in the strategic environment after the end of the Cold War, and in order to solve its security needs, Romania's fundamental national interest is to join NATO, the single structure capable of providing guarantees for peace and stability in its regional area of interest.

To achieve this interest, Romania started to implement a comprehensive reform process in all domains of national power – political, economic, military, and psychological. In the military realm, the main policy by which the reform is applied is the transformation of the Armed Forces. Through this process Romania aims to create a compact, efficient and flexible military force that is fully capable of meeting its national security needs and NATO's expectations as a full Alliance member.

This paper analyses Romania's objectives for its Armed Forces transformation, envisages ways and means leading to their achievement, and recommends a possible option that can be considered.



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## ROMANIAN ARMED FORCES TRANSFORMATION PROCESS – THE CORE ISSUE OF THE NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY TOWARDS NATO INTEGRATION

After the end of the Cold War, Romania faced a security challenge stemming from the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. In that part of Europe, a “security vacuum”<sup>1</sup> had developed, mainly, because of the disintegration of international structures. In these circumstances, taking into account that the 1989 December Revolution aimed to return to the democratic values familiar to Romanian people long before World War II, Romania considered that the only way to solve its security need was to get integrated into Euro-Atlantic structures. NATO, especially, was seen as the single structure capable to provide guarantees for peace and stability for Romania and its regional area of interest.

Setting up this option as a fundamental national strategic objective - which the whole political spectrum reached a consensus on from the very beginning - various reform programs started in all domains of national power. In the military realm commenced a significant downsizing and doctrinal reorientation process based on multiple reform programs. But a coherent strategy was not issued until later, in 1999, with the elaboration of the Romanian National Security Strategy.

In the National Security Strategy Romania's fundamental national interest is “meeting the conditions for Romania's integration as a NATO and EU member. Romania must become a component with full obligations and rights of the two organizations, the only ones capable of guaranteeing its independence and sovereignty and enable an economic, political and social development similar to that of the democratic countries”<sup>2</sup>. To achieve this interest, among others regarding the national powers (political, economic, psychological), in the military realm one of the main policies is “restructuring and streamlining Romania's Armed Forces, especially the structural modernization of forces”<sup>3</sup>.

This policy, at the national level, represents a strategic objective for the Romanian Ministry of National Defense, and within the Military Strategy of Romania it is formulated as “Restructuring and Modernization”. This objective is meant to solve two major issues:

- First, to set up new structures of command and control, combat, combat support and combat service support, which are to be, from the organization standpoint, modern, mobile, flexible and having a high deployment and protection capability and sustainability, an increased firepower and able to carry out the whole range of the military missions.<sup>4</sup>

- Second, the procurement of modern and adequate equipment for the military, in order to facilitate the technical interoperability with the Alliance armed forces<sup>5</sup>.

The basic aim of the restructuring and modernization process is to provide a smaller, more efficient, active and mobile force, able to respond more properly and quickly to the new challenges of the security environment.

### **THE SECURITY AND POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT**

The closing of the twentieth century and the onset of the twenty-first century has been marked by profound changes of the security environment. The whole world became more complex, interdependent, with the globalization process seeming to be the single most important global tendency.

The challenges induced by globalization and its overlapping with the centrifugal tendencies of regionalization and fragmentation generate new tensions and risk factors. The current evolutions show continuous multiplication of the number of entities acting in the global arena through the assertion of non-state actors. This leads to an increase in the complexity of the decision-making process in the foreign and security policies of states. These challenges have to be answered by new forms of solidarity, capable of managing a wide range of tensions and risks associated with regional instability, the trafficking of radioactive substances and people, and re-division of some spheres of influence<sup>6</sup>. Such complex circumstances underline once more the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity of the environment. It becomes more obvious that states' national interests and goals can be achieved through international cooperation addressing all problem-generating issues of today's world.

On European soil, once the Cold War was over and the winds of democratization started blowing throughout Eastern Europe, changes in the environment revealed a positive trend defined by the European and Euro-Atlantic integration process of a progressively increasing number of states sharing and promoting the same values of democracy and market economy. Nevertheless, processes disturbing and threatening European security, at least at the regional level, such as states breaking up, and putting aside and isolating international actors have taken place. As such, there are still states in the Central and Eastern Europe facing social, economic and political difficulties related to the process of transition to a society based on the principles of democracy and market economy, which can generate risks for the security in the area. Unfortunately, Romania stretches in that vicinity. But the main assumption regarding the security environment in Europe overall is that the risks of the emergence of a traditional military confrontation on the European continent have seriously decreased.

After the collapse of the communist regimes, Romania – taking the way of the democratic development- faced a security challenge resulting from the lack of any collective security arrangements. Even though there was not any imminent military conflict, Romania had to concentrate on fulfilling national responsibilities in the security field, taking into account that Romania lies “at the crossroads of four strategic evolutions<sup>17</sup> in the following geo-strategic areas:

- Central Europe – a future pole of regional prosperity
- South-Eastern Europe – a provider of instability
- Community of Independent States (CIS) – a fragile collective of states and
- The Black Sea – an area of strategic importance for NATO Southern Flank, as well as a transit route for Central Asia energetic resources.

At the present time, Romania does not consider any state to be a potential enemy. However, the National Security Strategy foresees the potential for regional instability resulting from an imbalance of military capabilities; the expansion of terrorist networks and activities; an overflow of ethnic, religious and other tensions and conflicts; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction technology and material; the growth of arms trafficking; the spill over of drug trafficking, organized crime, illegal immigration and refugee migration.

Given all these circumstances, in such a changing international context, Romania regarded NATO as the only organization playing an essential role in strengthening the Euro-Atlantic security after the end of the “Cold War”. Consequently, Romania assessed that the security environment presented a short-term opportunity to prepare for integration into the North-Atlantic Alliance. This became her primary national strategic objective. Figure 1 shows the process of adapting the Romanian Armed Forces to the security environment.

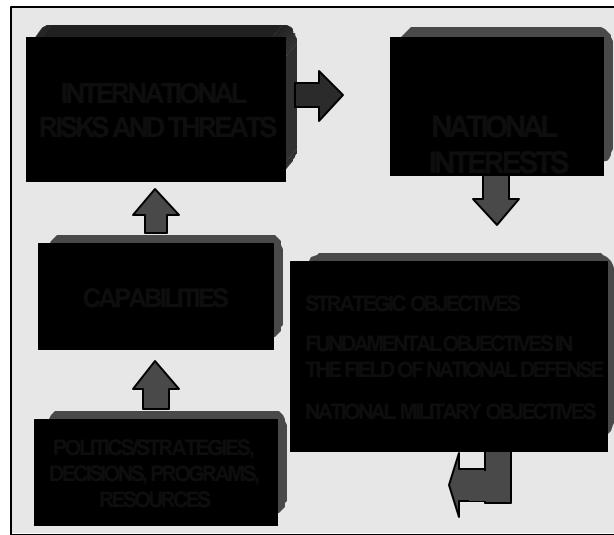


FIGURE 1. THE PROCESS OF ADAPTING THE ROMANIAN ARMED FORCES

In order to focus all national resources and efforts towards meeting these vital national interests, Romania adopted her National Security Strategy in 1999, which makes the Armed Forces the fundamental institution responsible for ensuring national security. This responsibility becomes all the more complex when it must be performed by concomitantly maintaining an adequate combat power and undergoing the restructuring process deemed to be more than necessary. Therefore, in 2000, for the first time in her military practice, Romania developed the Military Strategy, the cornerstone document establishing the strategic goals, the most suitable ways and the required means to be employed for achieving the national strategic goal of NATO integration, the best and only way for protecting and guaranteeing Romania's national security. By her NATO accession, Romania intends to be an active contributor to Alliance's security policies, not just to benefit from, by bringing her contribution to NATO's through offering specialized forces to fill the "niche capabilities", such as NBC units, mountains troops, and engineers. All the Romanian forces earmarked to participate in multinational operations under NATO command will be designed, structurally and functionally, in accordance with NATO operational concepts, rendering them deployable, flexible, self-sustainable and capable to conduct the whole range of military operations.

In order to meet this strategic objective, the Armed Forces are undergoing a reform process aimed at manpower restructuring, setting up a new force structure and providing it with modern combat equipment.

The National Military Strategy, approved by the Government in April 2000, defines the missions of the Armed Forces in peacetime, during crisis and war, establishes the structure, the forces and capabilities deemed necessary to deter or defeat any threat to Romania's security, while, at the same time, participating in crisis management and collective defense operations.

The current policy is to develop adequate defense capabilities to deter or defeat military aggression, nationally or in cooperation with Partners or future Allies, and to enhance its contribution to regional stability through participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and humanitarian missions. Objectives include the integration of the Romanian armed forces into Alliance and European military structures, reform and modernization of its armed forces, the promotion of civil-military relations and the strengthening of civil and democratic control over its armed forces. In order to implement this strategy Program Force 2005 was designed. This new military force structure framework, which is currently being implemented, seeks to ensure Romania's response to these risks and her effective contribution to the maintenance of stability and peace in its regional area of interest, mainly the Balkan Region.

### **THE OBJECTIVES OF TRANSFORMATION**

The Military Strategy of Romania is, undoubtedly, an active-defensive one, based on four pillars, four strategic concepts: *restructuring and modernization, credible defense capability, enhance and more operational partnership, and gradual integration*. Although, each of them, individually, has its own weight and importance within the strategy implementation process, the core is represented by the restructuring and modernization stage, the successful completion of which will determine the achievement of the three others.

According to the Military Strategy of Romania "the aim of the restructuring and modernization process of the Romanian Armed Forces is to establish Project Force 2005, which is to be more compact, efficient, effective, flexible "<sup>7</sup> and both capable to defend the interests of the Romanian state and to be compatible with NATO standards. These two main end-states are clearly expressed by the current Chief of the Romanian General Staff, General Mihail Popescu:

The new force structure we have considered is a structure that can be easily adapted to become interoperable with the force structure of the Alliance. But I want to emphasize once more that this force structure meets, first of all, Romania's security interests and then, if these also meet the integration requirements, it is even better.<sup>8</sup>

The fundamental goal of the national defense of Romania is to establish a military capability sufficient for defending Romania's national sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and constitutional democracy, through achievement of the strategic goal of the integration into NATO. The achievement of the fundamental goal of national defense depends on the attainment of the following national military objectives:

- prevent, deter and defeat any armed aggression against Romania by establishing a modern and effective military force;
- enhance conflict prevention and crisis management which could directly affect the military security of Romania;
- intensify cooperation and gradual integration into NATO and EU military structures, while creating conditions for Romania's accession to them as soon as possible.
- develop the capability of the Armed Forces to conduct joint and combined operations both independently and within multinational forces;
- support of public authorities in the case of civil emergencies and humanitarian actions;
- increase armed forces contribution to regional stability by participating in conflict prevention, crisis management and collective defense, as well as in humanitarian actions,<sup>9</sup>

Mainly, the core of transformation is to build and develop such a force structure capable to successfully meet both the requirements of national defense and of NATO collective defense. With regard to the latter, by the transformation process, Romania planned to make available for NATO-led missions a mechanized brigade by the end of 2003, and a second one by the end of the year 2005. Focusing, after 2005, on the equipment modernization stage, concurrently with an increased professionalization level, the Romanian offer of forces to be employed in NATO-led operations will consist of a division framework.

Having the whole spectrum of political support and a constant governmental financial assistance, while continuing current strategic, multilateral and bilateral partnerships, the implementation of the transformation process will create favorable conditions for both strengthening security in the region and the modernization of the Romanian Armed Forces. Once all these objectives are achieved, Romania will possess a smaller, but more mobile, efficient and modern military structures that will allow a better protection of her national interests by the adequate use of the military assets.

## MODALITIES TO IMPLEMENT THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

Having the objective clearly established, the next step was to develop the appropriate ways that can lead to its achievement. The whole transformation process is very complex and must address equally matters related to the human resources component as well as to equipment modernization and infrastructure components. Based on these coordinates, the military policy makers drew the following courses of action :

- Restructuring the force.
- Management of the personnel to be discharged, and of the excessive equipment holdings and infrastructure.
- The professionalization of force, and
- Equipment procurement.

In order to keep a proper balance in the military system during the execution of these courses of action and due to the financial restraints, the first three courses will be simultaneously developed in a time framework while the fourth one will be implemented last as more substantial funds are made available for it.

“Restructuring the Force” is the most important task, among the others, and the cornerstone for the entire transformation process of the Romanian Armed Forces. Its achievement enables and powers the implementation of all others courses of action. For this reason, it will be analyzed more in-depth. The configuration of the future military force of Romania was defined as *Project Force –2005*. According to it, the whole military body is adjusted to better respond to the necessity of defending the national strategic interests of Romania and achieving its national security objectives. It contains the detailed measures for the reorganization of the command and control system, combat forces, combat support and combat service support forces.

The total planned strength of the force will be 140,000 of which 112,000 are military personnel and 28,000 are civilians. This figure represents approximately 50 percent of the Romanian military strength of 1989 that numbered 222,500 military and civilian personnel. The number of professional military personnel will increase from the current 47 percent to 71 percent.

The new Tables of Organization and Equipment provide commands and forces with carefully designed structures, which are compact, highly effective, flexible, efficient, compatible with NATO standards and interoperable with the Alliance armed forces.

In order to carry out the whole range of strategic missions, the Romanian Armed Forces include Operational, Territorial and Reserve forces. The Operational Forces comprise Army (mechanized, tank, artillery, mountain troops, paratroopers) Air Force, air defense, and Navy formations and units, fully manned and adequately equipped and trained. In crises and war, they will be subordinated to operational commands, aimed at setting up groups of forces necessary for conducting military actions both on the national territory and abroad within multinational forces<sup>10</sup>.

The Territorial and Reserve forces include formations and units from each Service and their main tasks are: conducting territorial defense, training and mobilization and supporting local authorities in civil emergencies. The level of manning of the Territorial Forces range from 20 to 70 percent of their military strength. At war, following their augmenting/mobilization and a period of intensive combat training, the territorial forces may conduct operations either subordinated to the Joint Task Headquarters or to the Territorial Commands.

The Romanian Armed Forces consist of: Surveillance and Early Warning Forces, Crises Situations Response Forces, Main Forces and Reserve Forces<sup>11</sup>. According to the operational category in which each of these structures is included, they are prioritized in distributing resources, personnel, equipment and training.

The Surveillance and Early Warning Forces include reconnaissance and electronic warfare units and subunits, intelligence structures, and those used for C4I systems, as well as small, modular and mobile combat units and their main missions are: identification of forthcoming conflicts and crises, the management of the factors and premises likely to increase threats against the national security and, preventing surprise. The forces mentioned above are, generally, in a state of permanent combat readiness. They are subordinated to the General Staff, other central bodies of the Ministry of National Defense, as well as to the Armed Services.

The most important missions of the Crises Situations Response Forces are: to participate in crises management and to conduct the first response in case of an armed conflict. These forces are the main deterrent element and are structured as follows:

- Immediate Reaction Forces;
- Rapid Reaction Force;
- Commands, formations and units nominated in the Individual Partnership Program<sup>12</sup>

Rapid Reaction Forces consist of units and formations of all armed services, able to perform missions both independently and jointly. According to the National Command

Authorities' decisions, part of these forces can be used within multinational structures for conflict prevention, crisis management, humanitarian aid and other international missions under the aegis of UN and OSCE. All the forces designed for carrying out such missions have an adequate size, deployment capabilities and the necessary logistical support for self-sustainability.

The Main Forces consist of peacetime formations and units, most of them manned only partially and mainly with conscripts. These forces will become operational in war only after being manned with human and material resources and after a period of intensive combat training. However, if a crisis develops in a very short time, the active elements of their structure could be assigned to the group of forces tasked for crisis management.

The Reserve Forces include formations and units established at mobilization. The later two categories of forces – Main and Reserve Forces – achieve the combat capability after manning/establishment and a certain period of intensive training.

From the structural point of view, the Romanian Armed Forces consist of:

- Land Forces
- Air Forces and
- Naval Forces.

For conducting special missions, Special Forces will be established, both at the central and at each service level, and this capability is expected to be operational in the medium term. This force will be available for counter-terrorist operations outside Romanian territory. The Special Forces component is also an instrument identified under the Romanian National Strategy for Preventing and Countering Terrorism, which was newly developed in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.

*The Land Forces* are the basic component of the armed forces and must be able to conduct the whole range of land and air-mobile military actions. Its operational structure will include 8 combat brigades, 4 combat support and 2 logistics brigades. Part of the units should be able to conduct actions abroad, within multinational groups of forces. Operational forces, on the whole, will be maintained at a readiness of seven to 90 days and manned at 70 percent to 90 percent of authorized strength with regulars and short-term volunteers. The Army's territorial and reserve structure will include 10 combat brigades, 5 combat support and 2 logistics brigades. Territorial forces will maintain a readiness level of 180 to 360 days, have a full complement of major equipment and be manned at 10 percent to 20 percent of their wartime strength<sup>13</sup>.

*The Air Forces* are responsible for defending state sovereignty within the national space in order to gain and maintain control over the air space and to support from the air the operations of the land or maritime forces. They will be included, mainly, in the category of surveillance or reaction forces, and will include within the active forces an operational command, 2 air division commands, 4 air bases and 2 air defense brigades. As reserve forces they will have 2 air bases and 2-3 airfields. The transformation of the air force is based on the aim of reducing force levels, streamlining command and control, and creating more flexible, sustainable, better trained and interoperable forces<sup>14</sup>.

*The Naval Forces* are meant to conduct military operations independently or in cooperation with other armed services, or within a multinational group of forces, in the maritime, river or land space of national interest. Their units will be included especially in the category of surveillance or rapid reaction forces and will consist of an operational command, a Maritime Fleet, a River Flotilla and other forces. Plans foresee a maritime structure divided between active and territorial forces. The former will comprise virtually all components of the navy with the exception of logistics support facilities ashore and most logistics support/auxiliary vessels which belong to the territorial force. Active forces will be maintained at a manning level of 70 percent to 100 percent and at a readiness of seven to 90 days. The manning levels and readiness of territorial forces will be considerably less in peacetime and will be determined by operational requirements<sup>15</sup>.

The force restructuring process requires a close correlation with the measures undertaken for better personnel management. Policies for the management of active forces, those to be discharged, as well as the disposal of excess equipment holdings and infrastructure must be considered. This imposes the identification and definition of each and every assignment according to rank, specialty and necessary equipment. In order to improve personnel management related issues, two fundamental documents were issued: the Military Personnel Status and, since 2001, the Military Career Guide. These documents provide the legal framework for: the pyramid-like re-organization of the military personnel structure – as shown in figure 2; weight of ranks; ensuring access to the value-based individually career; dramatic downsizing, by 60 percent, of the senior rank officers; reducing the number of general officers positions from 450 to 140, and achieving a ratio of 1 officer/2.4 NCOs. To support the requirements of the emerging force structure, new personnel management procedures have been introduced to improve transparency, fairness and equal opportunities. Measures already implemented include new procedures for selection boards, amended organization tables and

enhanced training and education measures. Further requirements have been identified, such a revised pay system based on rank and improved housing allocation.

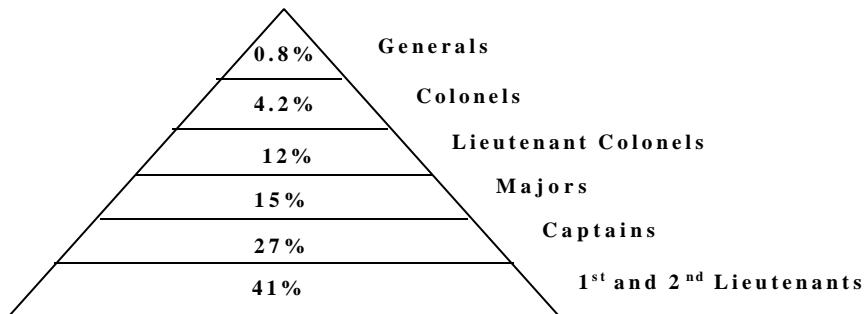


FIGURE 2. THE MILITARY RANKS PYRAMID

All personnel, equipment and infrastructure elements made redundant will be managed in accordance with laws and the personnel and procurement policies. For the personnel made redundant, a re-conversion program has also been established to assist in preparing them for civilian life. In order to deal with the large quantities of surplus equipment that are to be removed from the army inventory, and the disposed elements of infrastructure, a sales agency was established within the Ministry of Defense which is responsible for selling or disposing of this surplus equipment.

Regarding the professionalization of the force, the Military Strategy of Romania stipulates that “the main element of the military generating strength and will is the man itself. The native fighter skills of the Romanian people are a guarantee for the short-term professionalization of the Armed Forces”<sup>16</sup>. The current conscription system, based on the compulsory military service, will be maintained, especially, for manning the main defense forces while the surveillance, early warning and crisis response units will be entirely manned with professionals. A straight way to realize a military of professionals is to apply the new concept of training and operations of the armed forces that consists of two main components: the education and professional development of the personnel in the military education system and the combat training of the military structures<sup>17</sup>.

The education system of officers and NCOs is meant to provide a high management, technical and specialized education and training within the military academies of the services and the newly established National Defense University. An increased important role in the

officers and NCOs education, in regard with NATO procedures, at tactical and joint level, pertains to the NATO/PfP Regional Training Center. Special stress is placed on sending as many officers as possible to attend foreign colleges, schools and training establishments in NATO member countries. Also, the place and role of the NCOs in the professional military structures is being reshaped by assigning them as leaders on the basis of the military hierarchy – crew, squad, platoon, instructors, staff and administrative specialists. Additionally, for manning especially the Crisis Situations Response Forces, a new system of training professional sergeants and privates was put in place.

The equipment procurement programs will be mainly developed after the end of the restructuring process, when the new force structure will be in place. Until 2005, the stress will be on maintaining the main current programs which are a prerequisite for modernizing the equipment starting with 2004. Because of financial restraints, "only the procurement required to maintain adequate equipment for the forces and to perform the transition to Project Force – 2005 will be made"<sup>18</sup>. All other major material procurement programs will be re-scheduled until 2005, without affecting the C4I development program at all echelons. Several previously contracted equipment programs are progressing, including the upgrade of tanks, armored combat vehicles and multiple launcher rocket systems, and the fielding of additional unmanned aerial vehicles in the army, modernization of the existing frigates, and the upgrade of air force combat aircraft and helicopters.

I believe that the courses of action described above were well thought out in order to ensure the success of the restructuring and modernization process and, finally, to support the achievement of the strategic national objective – NATO integration.

#### **RESOURCES EMPLOYED**

In order to facilitate the implementation of the selected courses of action, the necessary resources have been identified and they include "the personnel, financial, technological, scientific, material and other means"<sup>19</sup> that will be allocated by the Romanian Government to sustain the conduct of the Armed Forces' transformation process.

Emphasizing the crucial importance of personnel as one of the basic means, the Military Strategy of Romania stipulates that special attention will be paid to the human factor that "should become the main force generator of national defense and it should be placed in the center of the military system efforts"<sup>20</sup>. A very important task will be the professionalization of personnel by training in accordance with the national and NATO standards. The training is

concentrated on maintaining the skills required in the use of combat equipment at high standards, staff procedures and the use of C4I systems in carrying out missions.

Special attention is being given to improving the quality of life of military personnel. In this direction several steps are been taken, such as solving the acute problem of housing by increasing the rent compensation from 25 percent to 50 percent of military pay and by initiating a program of building new housing and extending financial assistance when moving to other garrisons to ensure better social protection for military families.

The other fundamental means is *financial support*. The implementation of the restructuring process of armed forces will require a real increase of funds. By using the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution System as the main tool of the integrated approach for resource management the planned funds will increase from about \$ 0.7 billion in 2000 to \$ 1.19 billion in 2007 to which the foreign debts for procurement expenses and the money necessary for education and health should be added. The allocation of resources is tightly knit to the budget envisaged for multi-annual planning process, which include two phases. The first phase (2000 – 2003) focuses on orientating funds towards the structural restructuring of armed forces and, the second phase (2004 – 2007) will stress especially the modernization of combat equipment.

As the Romanian economic position improves, greater certainty in financial planning will result. The GDP is forecast to rise 5.2 percent in 2003 and inflation rates are expected to continue falling from 46.6 percent in 2000 to under 10 percent by 2005. Since 2003, the Romanian Government has committed a minimum of 2.38 percent of GDP for defense from 2003 to 2006. This allows military budgetary planners, by applying the PPBES, to make a consolidated financial plan of presumably available funds up to 2007, as figure 2 shows<sup>21</sup>, that will sustain the programs envisaged for the upcoming years.

DETAILS	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>Defense expenditure (million ROL)</b>				
- planned	52,217,200	59,381,000	65,289,120	69,907,043
<b>% distribution by category</b>				
a) total operating pay and allowances pensions	74.68 19.27 10.52	72.96 17.48 9.43	75.88 16.06 8.76	75.89 14.62 8.32
b ) total capital major equipment	25.32 24.13	27.04 25.67	24.12 22.76	24.11 23.02
<b>% distribution by service</b>				
a) Land	30.97	29.57	29.13	31.81
b) Navy	13.35	15.13	12.04	11.51
c) Air	23.35	24.77	28.98	29.36
d) Command/support	32.33	30.53	29.85	27.32

TABLE 1. DEFENSE EXPENDITURES

Romania is continuing a substantial program to dispose of military bases that are not needed to support its revised force structure. Many of these are being converted to meet civilian requirements. While there is little impact on the defense budget, there are some savings in maintenance costs.

To date, the transformation process has been conducted successfully proving that there was a proper balance among the objectives, ways and means and the possible risks that would have threatened this strategy were substantially minimized. And what could better support this assessment than Romania's invitation to join NATO at Prague Summit from November 2002?

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The current military strategy was conceived in the light of achieving the national security strategic objective of integration into the Euro-Atlantic organization. Now, with this goal nearly met, some segments of it need some changes in order to better respond to the forthcoming and imminent demands of member status. Taking into account the developments occurring both within NATO structures (i.e. changes in NATO's Operational Concepts, the development of NATO Response Force, the requirements of Prague Commitments Capabilities) and in Romania's domestic environment (economic growth, great public support for NATO

membership), in recent years, the current military strategy must be adjusted, especially in regard to the restructuring of forces and professionalization.

Consequently, as a future NATO member, given the new NATO's Operational Concept and Force Structure, on the one hand, and the compatibility and interoperability requirements, on the other hand, the current structure of Romanian Armed Forces consisting of Operational, Territorial and Reserve forces should be replaced by a system which combines two types of forces: Deployable and In-Place forces and three graduated readiness levels: High Readiness Forces, Forces at Lower Readiness and Long-term Build-up Forces, as follow:

- The actual Operational Forces to be replaced by Deployable Forces with units in each of the three readiness levels;
- The current Territorial Forces to become In-Place Forces, but consisting of only High Readiness Forces.
- The Reserve Forces to be disbanded.

Such an approach would have the following benefits:

- A reduced number of military and civilian personnel, but more financial funds for training, education and equipment modernization;
- Modern, deployable, multi-role and fully sustainable units;
- A Force Structure in line with NATO's philosophy that will allow Romania to be "net contributors to security" and not only a consumer.

Another issue that needs to be considered is the present conscription system, based on compulsory military service. This is no longer effective and expensive, and should be gradually abandoned. The replacement process of conscripts with professionals can be carried out in two phases:

- First phase: professionals to man all units from Deployable Forces;
- Second phase: replacement of conscripts in units from In-Place Forces.

Once Romania become a candidate state for joining NATO after the 2002 Prague Summit new ideas addressing the transformation process have been outlined in order to facilitate a more appropriate approach to the increased membership responsibilities. These thoughts represent the general guidelines for a new way of restructuring called *Objective Force –2007*. The major directions of the *Objective Force –2007* are the following:

- The overall strength of the Armed Forces will number 90,000, with 75,000 military personnel and 15,000 civilians; these figures require an additional downsizing of the force structure than that contained in the current restructuring planes;
- A considerable reduction of Land Forces brigades, aircraft squadrons and air defense units of Air Forces; in the Navy, more units will be disbanded while, through a capital investment program, the number of frigates will be increased.
- A proper mix of active (operational) and territorial structures, while the reserve units will be disbanded.

Considering the fundamentals of the *Objective Force – 2007*, on the one hand, and the characteristics and features of the new NATO's Operational Concept and Force Structure, on the other hand, for implementing the transformation process in the Romanian Armed Forces, the most effective way to complete this process is to make the following adjustments:

- A force structure numbering 90,000 to include 75,000 military personnel and 15,000 civilians;
- The force structure comprised of Deployable and In-place forces at three levels of readiness: High Readiness Forces, Forces at Lower Readiness and Long-term Build-up Forces. The In-place forces will contain fewer units, with a high readiness status.
- The replacement of the conscription system with professionals by 2007, based on a two-phase process: Phase I – full manning with professionals of all Deployable forces by the end of 2005; and, phase II – complete professionalization of In-place forces by the end of 2007.

## **CONCLUSION**

All that I have described and referred to above displays the fact that Romania elaborated a coherent military strategy for achieving its primary national objective – resolving the security arrangements in a dramatically changed world.

Romania's invitation to join NATO at the Prague Summit in November 2002 has proved that all the progress and improvements made within the military realm were the outcome of implementing a right military strategy stemming from a comprehensive and well-rounded national security strategy.

While transformation as a paradigm tends to turn into a style of living and a guarantee of success, I am very confident that the current Romanian military strategy will be adjusted to

respond to the challenges and conditions entailed by its new position as a NATO member in the years to come. Probably, those adjustments will partially reflect, at least, some of the recommendations submitted in this strategic research paper.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Tatiana, Kostadinova, 2002, "East European Public Support for NATO Membership: Sources, Changes and Trends", International Conference Globalization of Civil-Military Relations: Democratization, Reform and Security, Bucharest, Romania.

<sup>2</sup> *Romania's National Security Strategy, Chapter 1*, <<http://www.mapn.ro/stratsec>>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, *Chapter 5*, <<http://www.mapn.ro/stratsec>>.

<sup>4</sup> *Military Strategy of Romania*, <<http://www.mapn.ro/stratsec>>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> *Romania's National Security Strategy, Chapter 3*, <<http://www.mapn.ro/stratsec>>.

<sup>7</sup> *Military Strategy of Romania*, <<http://www.mapn.ro/stratsec>>

<sup>8</sup> Interview with army general Mihail Popescu, the chief of Romanian General Staff – Bucharest, June, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> *Military Strategy of Romania*, <<http://www.mapn.ro/stratsec>>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> Ibid

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> *Military Strategy of Romania*, <<http://www.mapn.ro/stratsec>>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> NATO Defense Review Committee, 2003 Review of Defense Plans of invited nations Romania, February 2003, Bucharest, Romania.



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